

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-05 SCA-01 IO-13 MCT-01 SY-05
CU-04 ACDA-07 COME-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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SS-15 USIA-06 /097 W
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R 251552Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0931

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 3460

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, PA
SUBJ: RECENT POLITICAL DETAINEES TURNED OVER TO JUSTICE

REF: ASUNCION 3284

1. KEEPING TO ITS PROMISE (SEE REFTEL) THAT THE 7 REMAINING JULY DETAINEES WOULD BE TURNED OVER TO JUSTICE QUICKLY, THE GOVERNMENT FRAMED CHARGES AGAINST THEM AUGUST 12 AND TRANSFERRED THEM FROM THE INVESTIGATIONS POLICE TO EMBOSCADA PRISON ON AUGUST 13. TWO DAYS AFTER, THE ALLEGED RINGLEADER, DR. JUAN FELIX BOGADO GONDRA, WAS TRANSFERRED TO TACUMBU PRISON, REPORTEDLY TO SEPARATE HIM FROM THE OTHERS. RELATIVES AND FRIENDS OF THE ACCUSED PERSONS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO VISIT THEM SINCE THEIR TRANSFER (AND HAVE PROVIDED FURTHER CONFIRMATION THAT THREE WERE SEVERELY TORTURED BY THE INVESTIGATIONS POLICE).

2. CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST THE DETAINEES HAVE BEEN FRAMED UNDER LAW 209/70 FOR THE "DEFENSE OF PUBLIC PEACE AND FREEDOM OF PERSONS IN THE CAPITAL". BOGADO GONDRA WAS TO MAKE HIS FIRST DECLARATION BEFORE THE JUDGE AUGUST 23, BUT PROCEEDINGS WERE POSTPONED, REPORTEDLY BECAUSE THE INVESTIGATIONS POLICE HAD NOT SENT DOCUMENTS CONNECTED WITH THE CASE TO THE COURT. THE HEARING HAS NOW
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BEEN RESCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 29.

3. A HIGH-PLACED GOP SOURCE, ECHOING INFORMATION PROVIDED TO US BY AN OPPOSITION LEADER AS WELL AS BY OTHERS CLOSELY LINKED TO THE BOGADO GONDRA GROUP, HAS TOLD US THAT JUDGE BERNABE VALDEZ, CONSIDERED THE MOST CORRUPT, VENAL AND EASILY MANIPULATED JUDGE IN PARAGUAY, HAS BEEN GIVEN

RESPONSIBILITY FOR HEARING THE CASES. ALSO, THE POLICE ARE HARD AT WORK TRYING TO MANUFACTURE EVIDENCE TO SUPPLEMENT BOGADO'S PRESUMABLY BOGUS CONFESSION. WE HAVE A RELIABLE REPORT THAT ONE OF THE POLITICAL-MILITARY ORGANIZATION (OPM) GROUP WHO HAS BEEN IN EMBOSCADA FOR ALMOST TWO YEARS WAS RETURNED BRIEFLY TO INVESTIGATIONS POLICE LAST WEEK WHERE HE WAS BROWBEATEN INTO SIGNING A STATEMENT IMPLICATING BOGADO GONDRA, UNDER THREAT OF BEING TORTURED.

4. THE EMBASSY HAS MADE KNOWN TO THE GOP ITS CONCERN OVER THESE REPORTS, AND THAT IT IS FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS CLOSELY AS A GAUGE OF THE GOP'S GOOD INTENTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

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